

2006 National Finalist and Award Winners

National Proficiency Finalist in Agricultural Sales – Placement

Dale Cruzan, III – Bridgeton, NJ - Cumberland Regional FFA Chapter

As an employee of the Marlboro Farm Market and Garden Center, Dale was able to develop a sound Supervised Agricultural Experience. With classroom instruction, “on the job training”, and FFA competitions to sharpen his skills, he was able to work his way from a seasonal employee loading customer’s cars to more production related responsibilities. Since the implementation of his SAE program, he has gained many skills and competencies including customer relation skills, closing sales, distribution of goods and services, product display, and effective marketing. Through his three-year SAE program, Dale worked 2,875 hours.

He aspires to graduate from Cook College, Rutgers University with a degree in landscape architecture and eventually own a landscape architect firm.

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National Agriscience Teacher of the Year Finalist

JoAnn Sopchak – Ocean City, NJ - Cape May Technical High School

This year’s Agriscience Teacher of the Year, JoAnn Spochak, is an outstanding individual both inside and outside of the classroom. She uses hands- on activities and technology to enhance the educational experience of the students. JoAnn turns students’ “Why?” questions into research opportunities and actively encourages participation in the Agriscience Fair. In JoAnn’s classroom, students can be found using professional soil and water test kits; soil probes and transit levels; plant growth regulators; food coloring, syringes, and incubators; candling lamps and egg scales; salinometers; and water thermometers. Her students participate in activities that include soil sampling and testing, plant propagation, measuring physical water parameters, avian species identification through embryo dyeing, record-keeping, and pedagogical support of scientific components assist the students in applying their scientific knowledge and use of the scientific method. She incorporates science standards not only in the classroom, but with students work-based learning experiences as well.

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National Agriscience Teacher of the Year Finalist
Joel Rudderow – Pedricktown, NJ - Penns Grove High School

Joel Rudderow teaches Introduction to Agriscience, one of three science courses freshmen can select when entering high school. He notes that most students start out thinking of the course simply as “a science class” but discover that it offers much more as they pursue supervised agricultural experiences and leadership opportunities through the FFA. He has been actively engaged in efforts to establish a Food Science curriculum to support the industry needs of the South Jersey area. Joel teaches various aspects of agriculture using science as the basis. To explore plant and animal cells, his students observe culture bacteria found in the classroom. His students make cheese to better understand fermenting bacteria used to create food products. In the genetics unit, students extract their own DNA and perform a number of laboratories that demonstrate mutations in genetics as well as the process of cloning. Joel’s students perform tilth tests to separate the three types of soil particles when he is delivering information on soils. The difference between the Biology class and the Intro to Agriscience class is that Joel’s is hands-on and allows the students to experience the education, while incorporating leadership and career skills.

National Chapter Award Program

Three Star Chapter (ranking in the top 3% of the nations chapters)

Allentown FFA Chapter

Lead Advisor: V. Jacque Roszel

Exceptional student, chapter and community development activities lead the Allentown FFA Chapter to a successful year. Student involvement and growth is promoted through recreational activities, career development events, and leadership training experiences. The Allentown FFA Ski Trip is the most successful healthy lifestyle opportunity provided by the chapter.

Allentown FFA members prepare a newspaper supplement and conduct a sponsor breakfast. These public relation activities demonstrate the value of agricultural education and inform students, parents, school officials, and the

community about chapter accomplishments. The chapter developed “Ag Day” and delivered a PALS program to help elementary school students become better informed about the food system and related agricultural issues.

National Chapter Award Program

Three Star Chapter (ranking in the top 3% of the nations chapters)

Newton

Lead Advisor: Worth Christian

Through their dedication to student, chapter and community development, the Newton FFA Chapter is defining leadership for lifelong success.

Members are encouraged to apply for State and American FFA Degrees through a workshop hosted by the chapter. In a recruitment effort, they hold a GPS Nature Day providing middle school students hands on experience with GPS and the environment.

This year, the Newton FFA Chapter improved the community through activities such as “Helping the Hungry” where students butcher a deer and donate the meat to a local food bank and “Helping Katrina Victims” which allowed for over \$4000 in supplies to be sent to Mississippi.

National Chapter Award Program

Three Star Chapter (ranking in the top 3% of the nations chapters)

Penns Grove

Lead Advisor: Joel Rudderow

The Penns Grove FFA Chapter uses the FFA Mission Statement, “Premier Leadership, Personal Growth and Career Success,” as the roadmap for a successful year.

This year, members participated in the New Jersey Advocacy and Legislative Leadership Day and Chapter Officer Leadership Training where

they developed teamwork, communication and decision-making skills to enhance their “premier leadership.” To encourage “personal growth,” the chapter encourages members to become active citizens of the community by collecting trash for the Penns Grove Boro Clean Communities Program, participating in the FFA recycled cell phone drive, and volunteering at the American Red Cross Blood Drive.

Participating in Career Development Events, fundraising opportunities, and officer trainings give members skills that will lead to career success.

National Chapter Award Program

Two Star Chapter

Woodstown

Lead Advisor: Cheryl Lowe

The Woodstown FFA Chapter has implemented the mission and strategies of the FFA into their program of activities.

Woodstown FFA members are encouraged to participate in activities to enhance students’ life skills. These efforts include an FFA Week Board of Education Presentation and Apple Picking for Hurricane Relief. To further increase member participation and positively interact with support groups, the chapter conducted the National FFA Week Staff Breakfast and assisted with the Woodstown Alumni Affiliate Chinese Auction.

Community development was emphasized through participating in the Woodstown by Candlelight Historical Society Decorating Event, as well as the Salem County Adopt a Road Program. The chapter promoted FFA awareness by posting a billboard on a main highway during FFA week.